

MI Child Support Formula - My Thoughts on the Proposed Changes in the Child Support Formula

From: "Jimmie D. Compton, Jr." <jcomptonjr@hotmail.com>
To: <MCSF@courts.mi.gov>
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CC: <FHFBrown@aol.com>

For what it is worth, let me preface my comments by saying, *"I am a father, married for 30 years with two adult daughters and a grandson."*

Tying a reduction of child support payments to the time a non-custodial parent spends with his/her child would not be in the best monetary interest of the custodial parent. Such an arrangement will most likely result in contention between the two about overnight visits, and we can ill-afford more domestic contention. Given what we already know about the all too high incidences of domestic violence, why would we knowingly create a situation that exacerbates contention? That's not being responsible as a governing body. ***It is for that reason, I would not recommend implementing such a measure.***

Besides, it is not a bad thing for non-custodial parents who currently spends 128 nights or more with their child(ren) to pay on the same scale as non-custodial parents who spend less, little or no time with their child(ren). The former is doing so out of a sense of responsibility. For our governing body to reward parents demonstrating a sense of responsibility (as they should) simply because, in comparison, their peers aren't demonstrating responsibility is not prudent.

- *What if, for example, the U.S. government gave hard working honest American workers a tax break, because the workers who are "slackers" received paychecks with minimal effort?*

Non-custodial parents who demonstrate a sense of responsibility understand the value of leaving a legacy with their children. When they became a parent, they accepted this as a *"duty of love"*. Such a parental act stems from a respect for their spiritual relationship with the potential future adult, that happens to presently be their child. That is what parents do, no matter the cost. Now, just because government officials feel compelled to act, perhaps in response to social outrage, does not preclude the fact that this spiritual response is the only effective one.

1. There is no legally enforceable measure with *"teeth"* that can legislate sanctions against non-custodial parents who neglect this *"duty of love"*. In other words, if he/she pays their child support and does not want to see the child, there is nothing government can do.
2. Conversely, nor can an enforceable process that reward non-custodial parents, who embrace their *"duty of love"*, be established that is not prone to increase violence or dissention between the parents.

Rewarding responsible parents and sanctions against non-responsible parents fall within the realm of the spiritual. Again, regardless how much government wants to bring relief, without respecting that which is spiritual, it will only *spin its wheels, waste its dollars* and point its fingers.

So what can we do?

1) Continue supporting marital and parental programs.

2) Or, perhaps the governing body should only go as far as to provide a premise for responsible non-custodial parents to be identifiable by others. That governing body should not get into the business of rewarding or discouraging the spiritual duty of parents (thanks, but that is God's realm). Be it can provide a means for the custodial parent and the child(ren) to nominate the responsible non-custodial parent for some type of *Honorable Mention*, that the governing body could recognize by following up with a letter to the non-custodial parent. This provide a creditable basis for schools, community organizations, media, churches, clubs in the public sector to recognize, award or honor the non-custodial parent recipients of these letters. *That's spiritual!*

Pastor Jimmie Davis Compton, Jr.

Hope Bible Fellowship Church

19670 Sherwood

Detroit, MI 48234

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